

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 15, 2020

Governor Ron DeSantis
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor DeSantis:

As of today, the Florida Department of Health COVID-19 Data and Surveillance Dashboard lists 22,511 confirmed cases of novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and 596 deaths. We are concerned that this is not a complete and clear picture of the COVID-19 outbreak and deaths in the State of Florida. We ask that you work with the Florida Department of Health and county medical examiners to improve the accuracy and transparency of the data reported to the public. Doing so will be necessary as we work together to protect the health and safety of Floridians and our visitors.

First, we ask that you provide a detailed explanation of the public health justification for the State's decision to track separately cases among Florida residents and non-residents.

- Why does the State exclude COVID-19 deaths, hospitalizations, and case characteristics of non-residents in the dashboard and in the COVID-19 Data Daily Reports?
- Does the State report data about non-resident cases and deaths to the home state?
- Does the State include cases and deaths in the data if a Florida resident is diagnosed or dies in another state?

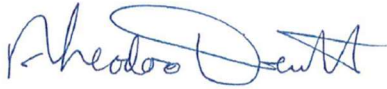
We are also concerned by inconsistencies between COVID-19 death tracking methods used by the Florida Department of Health and county medical examiners. According to reporting by WTVJ NBC 6 Miami, medical examiners in Miami-Dade County reported 41 more deaths than the State and Broward County reported 21 more deaths than the State as of noon on April 13, 2020. The *Tampa Bay Times* reported that the Palm Beach County medical examiner count was lower than the State's causing confusion about the facts of the impact the outbreak is having in our communities. We ask that you work with the Department of Health and county medical examiners to ensure that COVID-19 cases are detected and reported accurately.

- Does the State report resident COVID-19 deaths if the medical examiner lists COVID-19 as a contributory cause of death?
- Is the State working with county medical examiners to identify and report COVID-19 cases when an individual dies from known COVID-19 symptoms but was not tested before death?

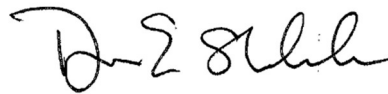
- Recently New York City revised the number of deaths attributable to COVID-19 adding an additional 3,700 deaths. Does the State plan on revising their death count if additional information arises concerning contributory cause of death?

We thank you for your efforts to protect Floridians and visitors from COVID-19. Complete, transparent, and accurate reporting about the impact of the outbreak in our state is necessary to improve the response from all levels of government and to save lives.

Sincerely,



Ted Deutch
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Donna E. Shalala
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Alcee L. Hastings
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Kathy Castor
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Debbie Mucarsel-Powell
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



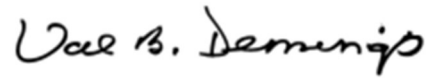
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